



# Treaty <sup>\*\*</sup> settlements



When the *Treaty of Waitangi* was signed on 6 February 1840, it promised that Maori would keep their lands, forests and fisheries.

During the next 40 years, as more and more British *immigrants* arrived in Aotearoa-New Zealand, Maori lost more and more of those lands, forests and *fisheries* to British settlers and to the government. After a war between the Tainui people of the Waikato and the British in the 1860s, Tainui lost 359,283 *hectares* of their land. In all, in the Waikato, Taranaki, Bay of Plenty and Hawkes Bay (areas which have the best land in Aotearoa-New Zealand), the government took more than 607,000 hectares of land from Maori owners to make farms for Pakeha settlers.

In the years that followed, Maori continued to complain about losing their land and demanded either the return of the land or *compensation*.

However, into the twentieth century, Maori had less and less land. Finally, in 1975, Maori from all over Aotearoa-New Zealand, led by Whina Cooper, a *kuia* (an old woman) from Northland, *marched* from the top of the North Island to Wellington to demand an end to the taking of land and compensation for lands stolen in earlier years. The government of the day passed the Treaty of Waitangi Act and set up the Waitangi *Tribunal*. By looking at the history of Maori land in this country and suggesting compensation for those Maori tribes who lost land, the Waitangi Tribunal's work was to deliver justice to the Maori people.

After so many years, the government decided it was not possible to return all the land that was taken a hundred years earlier. Much of this land was now towns, farms and homes, so instead of giving it back to its first owners, the government and the courts decided to pay compensation.

From 1992 some important *negotiations* took place.

That year the government gave the Maori tribes \$170 million, more than enough to buy Sealords, a large fishing company, and to invest in other businesses and industries. Three years later, in 1995, Tainui received \$170 million to *settle* its *claim* and in 1998 Ngai Tahu, the biggest South Island tribe, received the same amount to settle its claim.

Negotiations have not finished. Still many tribes are waiting for the day when the court hears their claims, and settlement is reached. It is, however, a long and slow process. The present government wants to settle all claims by 2014.

Much of the money already paid to tribes has been *invested in* businesses and *industries* all over New Zealand. Those tribes have invested money in forestry, in *agriculture*, in fishing, and also in education. Many Maori people and others have jobs working in these businesses and industries.



## Vocabulary

- treaty* — an agreement between two or more nations
- immigrants* — people who leave another country to live permanently in this country
- fisheries* — fishing areas
- hectares* — 1 hectare is 100 metres x 100 metres, or 10,000 square metres
- compensation* — money or goods given to cover the cost of a past wrong
- marched* (here) — walked in a group
- tribunal* — a special court
- negotiations* — talks which lead to settling an important matter
- settle* — end a disagreement
- claim* — say what wrong has happened and ask someone to fix it
- invest in* — put money into
- industries* — businesses that make goods to sell
- agriculture* — farming